

TABLE 6 Discards* of Mercury in Products in the Municipal Solid Waste Stream, 1970 to 2000 (in short tons)**

Products	1970	1975	1980	1985	1989	1995	2000
Household Batteries							
Alkaline	4.1	38.4	158.2	352.3	419.4	41.6	0.0
Mercury-Zinc	301.9	287.8	266.8	235.2	196.6	131.5	98.5
Others	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.5	5.2	3.5	0.0
<i>Subtotal Batteries</i>	310.8	330.9	429.5	592.0	621.2	176.6 ***	98.5 ***
Electric Lighting							
Florescent Lamps	18.9	21.5	23.2	27.9	26.0	32.6	39.7
High Intensity Lamps	0.2	0.3	1.1	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.2
<i>Subtotal Lighting</i>	19.1	21.8	24.3	28.6	26.8	33.6	40.9
Paint Residues	30.2	37.3	26.7	31.4	18.2	2.3	0.5
Fever Thermometers	12.2	23.2	25.7	32.5	16.3	16.9	16.8
Thermostats	5.3	6.8	7.0	9.5	11.2	8.1	10.3
Pigments	32.3	27.5	23.0	25.2	10.0	3.0	1.5
Dental Uses	9.3	9.7	7.1	6.2	4.0	2.9	2.3
Special Paper Coating	0.1	0.6	1.2	1.8	1.0	0.0	0.0
Mercury Light Switches	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.9	1.9
Film Pack Batteries	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL DISCARDS	421.8	460.5	547.5	730.4	709.1	245.3	172.7

* Discards before recovery.

** Weights in this report are converted to short tons of 2000 pounds, and refer to the weight of mercury in the products, not the weight of the entire product.

Source: EPA, *Characterization of Products Containing Mercury in Municipal Solid Waste in the United States, 1970 to 2000*, April 1992

*** NOTE: These numbers may not reflect recent state, federal, and battery manufacturer efforts to reduce mercury content in batteries. Since this report was released, several states have restricted mercury content in alkaline batteries, and/or banned the sale of mercuric oxide batteries. Federal legislation to restrict mercury use in batteries is pending. The battery industry has eliminated mercury as an intentional additive in alkaline batteries, except button cells and reusable alkaline batteries.